

***Iowa Outdoors***  
**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)**

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**April 1, 2008**

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**DNR WEBSITE OFFERS INSIDER'S VIEW OF HONEY CREEK RESORT STATE PARK**

**DNR CONTACTS: TERRY MONTGOMERY 515-402-7413**

RATHBUN LAKE, Iowa - Get an insider's look at construction progress at Honey Creek Resort State Park by visiting the website: [www.honeycreekresort.com](http://www.honeycreekresort.com). An online construction journal features commentary and updates by Project Administrator Terry Montgomery. Visitors can view photos of the resort and surrounding grounds.

“The journal offers everyone the opportunity to see how the resort is taking shape,” said Montgomery. “The aerial photography is striking and shows the full scope of the project and all the progress we have made.”

Currently, construction is advancing rapidly. The three-story hotel and conference center are fully framed and roofed, and crews will begin applying siding to the exterior in the next few weeks. Construction teams are installing drywall in hotel rooms and the HVAC equipment is arriving to the site. Additionally, the water park designers are digging ground for the park's lazy river and splash pool.

The website's online construction journal is updated multiple times a month with information and photos, and includes the latest news about Iowa's destination state park.

Honey Creek Resort State Park is located on the shores of Rathbun Lake in northern Appanoose County, about 15 miles north of Centerville and about 95 miles southeast of Des Moines.

The park is scheduled to open in August 2008 and will initially include a 105-room lodge, a convention center accommodating up to 300 people, restaurant, lounge, indoor aquatic center, 18-hole golf course, spa, beach, boat ramp, boat docking facilities and hiking trails.

Reservations for group meetings and events can be made by calling 641-724-9600.

**For more information about Honey Creek Resort State Park, contact Terry Montgomery at 515-402-7413.**

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## **DNR TO COLLECT WALLEYES RELEASED THROUGH DAM AT LAKE RATHBUN**

MORAVIA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources fisheries staff is working to recover walleyes released through the dam at Lake Rathbun during high water release from spring rains and snow melt entering the flood control reservoir. Walleyes moved to the Rathbun dam in large numbers Monday night, as they began staging to spawn.

The Rathbun fisheries staff and the Corps have been working cooperatively for the last seven years to monitor the high water release around the walleye spawn. The Corps will reduce the water release on Wednesday while the DNR begins setting entanglement nets in the lake to collect the brood stock walleyes for the hatchery.

“We are going to try to recapture those fish lost through the dam,” said Mark Flammang, fisheries biologist from Lake Rathbun. “There are going to be questions from the people actively fishing below the spillway wondering why we are catching walleyes

with our electro fishing boat, and we want to get the word out to avoid any tense situations.

“We are by no means 100 percent effective in our efforts to recapture these fish but if we do not act quickly, these brood stock walleyes will be lost down the Chariton River and to Missouri,” Flammang said.

The walleyes will remain below the dam for a brief period, then move downstream and eventually to the Missouri River. “The Chariton River does not have the characteristics necessary to be a walleye fishery. We manage Lake Rathbun as a walleye fishery,” he said.

“We are working cooperatively with the Corps who must manage the lake as it was intended, while protecting the walleye brood stock,” Flammang said.

Lake Rathbun is one of Iowa’s top walleye fishing lakes.

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## **EXCELLENT FISHING EXPECTED AT RENOVATED LAKES IN SOUTHWEST IOWA**

Southwest Iowa is poised to offer some of the best fishing in all of the upper Midwest for bluegills, crappies, walleyes, channel catfish and largemouth bass after numerous lake renovation projects were completed during the past five years.

Since 2003, the DNR has drained, killed out, protected and improved fish habitat in Lake Anita, Lake Icaria, Binder Lake, Old Corning Reservoir, Lake of Three Fires, Twelve Mile Lake, Cold Springs Lake and Viking Lake and that investment is now paying dividends.

“I know it was hard for many of the local anglers to give up their favorite fishing lake for a couple of years, but they have seen the results and we are hearing a lot of positive comments and now others are asking when their lakes can be done,” said Chris Larson, Iowa Department of Natural Resources fisheries bureau supervisor for the southwest region.

Larson said many of the renovated lakes faced similar problems: poor water quality, an over abundance of yellow bass or carp, poor land management in the watershed and overall poor fishing. The DNR developed a plan as it approached these lake renovations – work with landowners to find and fix the problems in the watershed, protect the shoreline, improve the in-lake fish habitat, eliminate the problem fish, restock the lake with the right fish balance and bring fish closer to shore anglers.

Lake Anita was first on the list. Choked with stunted yellow bass, the DNR drained the lake in 2003, killed what fish remained, deepened the shoreline, installed underwater mounds and structure, and added pea gravel spawning areas to attract bluegills and largemouth bass closer to shore.

Unfortunately, it took three years for the lake to refill. But the results are irrefutable. Fishing for bluegills, largemouth bass and channel catfish is phenomenal. Rooted aquatic vegetation is back and the water quality is excellent. The tremendous fishing for 14 to 19-inch bass has attracted six bass fishing tournaments in 2008.

Visitation and camping numbers at the state park are way up. In 2002 before the renovation, park visitations were estimated at more than 250,000 and camper nights at 19,500. In 2007, park visitations were estimated at 286,000 and camper nights at more than 21,000. And park use is expected to increase again this year. The increase in activity means more money is spent in the local economy.

Heading south on county hwy. 148 sits 665-acre Lake Icaria that faced a similar fate. The lake renovation in 2004 included significant work in the watershed, adding silt retention structures and applying conservation practices on the land. The plan also included a 52-acre wetland on the upper end of the lake to remove nutrients and sediments from the runoff before the water entered Icaria.

Work in the lake included adding 14 rock reefs topped with pea gravel to attract bluegills, bass, walleye and crappies. The reefs help to concentrate fish in a known area plus provide spawning substrate and, based on findings from electro fishing surveys, they are working as intended. A number of fishing jetties were constructed to provide good fishing from shore, particularly in May for bluegills and crappies. Walleye fishing along the south shore from the dam to the campground in April is excellent, and the lake has a good history as a channel catfish fishery.

The project has produced excellent growth rates in bluegills, crappies, walleyes and largemouth bass and the water clarity improved from one foot to nearly four feet. The lake is attracting so many people to fish and camp at the county park that the staff is working hard to keep up. The marina at Icaria has seen a jump in business, too.

A few miles south of Icaria is 70-acre Lake Binder, that was also renovated in 2004. Binder now offers excellent fishing for 9-inch crappies from its shore, largemouth bass fishing has really improved and the bluegills are acceptable size at just under 8 inches.

“A fishing trip to Binder in late April or early May would definitely be worth while for anyone who likes to catch fish,” Larson said.

Just east of Creston is Twelve Mile Lake that for years had been on the must fish list of walleye, crappie and bass anglers, until carp caused poor water quality and yellow bass all but eliminated any other fish species. During the last few years before

renovation, an occasional crappie or walleye could be caught, but the number of fishing trips dropped as the fishery declined.

Twelve Mile Lake serves as a drinking water supply and the lake was drained to fix a problem with a water intake. While the lake was down, the DNR installed five underwater rock reefs topped with pea gravel, added six “flat reefs” about 50 feet square of basketball sized and larger rock in six to eight feet of water. This is a new type of fish structure that attracts crustaceans and other prey species that would in turn attract the predators - largemouth bass, walleye and channel catfish.

Other in-lake work included adding spawning areas on a shelf created around the fishing jetties, plus putting deep water drop-offs like a trough around the shelf to attract predators close to shore. Smaller underwater reefs were added within casting distances to the jetties.

“The idea behind these types of structures is to attract fish closer to shore, near these fishing jetties,” Larson said.

The lake was renovated a little over two years ago and it has been a surprise, said Larson. Water clarity is excellent and since the carp were eliminated, the rooted aquatic vegetation is coming back. Bluegills are around 7-1/2 inches and a good number of walleyes are longer than 15 inches. For a number of years leading up to the renovation, there were zero bass fishing tournaments held at Twelve Mile. In 2008, there are 30 bass tournaments planned.

Of all the lake renovation projects, Larson said the best success story is Lake of Three Fires. The 95-acre lake in central Taylor County had produced fair to poor fishing for 25 to 30 years. The renovation project began with fixing problems in the watershed, installing wetlands to remove nutrients from the runoff before it enters the lake, dredging the lake itself and installed six fish attracting rock reefs.

The result was dramatic. Water clarity increased to more than 4 feet, and it is possibly the top fishery for bluegills, crappies and largemouth bass in the region. It provided excellent fishing through the ice for crappies up to 13 inches and is loaded with keeper-sized bluegills. It also is excellent for channel catfish.

“Of all our lake renovations in this area, Lake of Three Fires is probably the shining star,” Larson said. Park use has reflected the improvement in the lake. Lake of Three Fires State Park saw an increase of visitors by 8,000 and camping nights by more than 1,000 since the renovation.

The lake renovation rebound is in the early stages at Viking Lake, which was completed in 2006. “It’s coming back nicely,” Larson said. “The fish growth rates are excellent.”

The lake water quality is excellent and fishing should be good for channel catfish this summer. There will be a number of sub-legal sized largemouth bass caught this summer and the bluegills are about another year away.

Fixing a lake costs lots of money and time, Larson said, and that investment needs to be protected. All the work and money can be wasted if carp, yellow bass or an exotic species like zebra mussels or brittle naiad turn up in the lake, in addition to any negative changes in the watershed that were to occur.

These projects have been a success and people are coming back to southwest Iowa to fish, swim, camp and spend time near these clear, high value lakes and all this activity means big money to local economies. Once word gets out that the lakes of southwest Iowa are back and fishing is excellent, that short drive from Des Moines and Omaha/Council Bluffs will seem even shorter.

**For more information, contact Chris Larson, southwest region fisheries bureau supervisor with the Iowa DNR at 712-769-2587.**

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[electronic photos available]

## **PEREGRINE FALCONS RETURN TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER**

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

With high speed “fly-bys” and spectacular dives exceeding 250 mph, the peregrine falcon is the planet’s fastest and most dynamic bird species.

Wild peregrines are never more thrilling to observe than during annual spring courtship. That’s when adults conduct their most daring aerial maneuvers. The awe inspiring flights are intended to impress potential mates or defend territories from intruders. Watch as a pair shreds the firmament above its nest site and you’ll have discovered the reason why, for centuries, this unique bird species has so completely captivated the thoughts and imagination of human onlookers.

Iowa falcon watchers live in exciting times. Although still rare, restored peregrine populations continue to expand. Nesting pairs can now be observed in several of the state’s larger cities including Cedar Rapids, Davenport and Des Moines. The nesting season has arrived and some females are already incubating their four-egg clutches. By mid-June a new generation of Iowa peregrines will be ready to test their wings.

Last year, 12 active peregrine breeding territories were inventoried across the state. Ten of those pairs were successful and produced a total 23 fledged young which

established a new a new modern-day record. The most exciting aspect of last summer's production record is that peregrine falcons are continuing to recolonize the historic cliff ledge nest sites of the upper Mississippi river.

Historically, the rugged blufflands of the upper Mississippi was home to the greatest density of nesting peregrine falcons to be found anywhere in mid-America. Then, in a virtual blink of time, the peregrine's reign was over. An original victim of egg shell thinning due to DDT pesticides, falcons had completely disappeared from the Mississippi [as well as from the entire eastern half of the continent] by the late the 1960s. Bald eagles and ospreys suffered a simultaneous crash in numbers.

But sometimes a vanished species gets a second chance. DDT was banned in 1972 and, through the combined effort of captive breeding projects and dedicated conservationists, the peregrine falcon began its long flight to recovery.

The falcons' now successful restoration to natural river cliff sites is a direct result of efforts of the Iowa Peregrine Falcon Recovery Team. From 1998 to 2000, Recovery Team volunteers raised more than \$100 thousand needed to purchase, care for, and release 107 captive reared, baby peregrines. Survivors of those initial release efforts, along with their totally wild descendants, have now returned to reoccupy historic Mississippi River nest sites [eyries] in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Additional pairs claim territories on the synthetic ledges of nearby office buildings, bridges, and power company smokestacks.

As raptor enthusiasts first began preparing to release and care for baby falcons from atop the river cliffs of northeast Iowa, skeptics declared the work would fail --- that wild peregrines could never return to the upper Mississippi. But as we move into another spring nesting season, the critics are gone.

The peregrine falcon has successfully returned to the cliff ledge home of its ancestors. But the species is not necessarily home free. It will take continued environmental vigilance to keep it here.

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## **FISHING REGULATIONS RELAXED AT GREEN VALLEY**

CRESTON - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) relaxed the fishing regulations at Green Valley Lake on March 23, to allow anglers to more freely harvest fish before a planned September renovation. The DNR will begin lowering the lake water level the day after the July 4 holiday and will maintain this level until the day of renovation. The water release period is expected to take 30 days.

Anglers with a valid fishing license will be allowed to harvest any size or number of largemouth bass, channel catfish, and all other fish species from Green Valley Lake.

Any number of fishing poles or jug fishing will be allowed. Anglers must remain in sight of these lines at all times, and follow all other fishing regulations and area rules. Trot lines will be allowed (name and address must be attached), however lines may not be set across entire water body. Nets, dynamite, poison, electric shocking devices, or any stupefying substances will not be allowed. It is illegal to sell fish or stock captured fish into public waters.

The normal park hours of 4 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. will remain in effect. All boats must be off the lake or docked when the park is closed. Anglers may fish from the east roadway and adjacent access points or dam area during all hours of the day. Liberalized fishing regulations for Green Valley Lake will remain in effect until the date of the planned renovation on or about Sept. 4, 2008.

The fishery renovation is only part of a process to improve the lake's water quality. Implementation of soil conservation practices in the watershed and investigations into other sediment and nutrient delivery sources are underway. Green Valley was selected for restoration because it shows the greatest potential economic return for the investment incurred. Public meetings during the past several months have explained various aspects of the project. An expanding yellow bass population and the presence of common carp have lead to dramatic reductions in the numbers and the quality of all sport fish populations. These two species are causing a corresponding reduction in angling and boating use. This reduction in recreational use has caused loss economic revenue to the area economy.

Parks personnel will use this opportunity to reconfigure the campground to better serve today's larger campers, construct an additional shower building, as well as other improvements. Stabilizing shoreline erosion problems, construction of in-lake fish habitat, jetty repair, and boat ramp maintenance will also be part of the restoration project.

Throughout this fall and winter fish will be restocked, boat ramps repaired, and other in-lake construction projects completed, then the lake's water elevation will return to normal. Users should expect limited access to the lake until normal lake water elevation returns in 2009.

It is important that anglers never transport and release yellow bass, common carp or any fish species into any water system.

**For more information contact the Iowa DNR Fisheries at 641-464-3108 or Conservation Officer Marc Roberg at 641-414-2173.**

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## **TURKEY HUNTERS REMINDED TO REPORT THEIR HARVEST**

DES MOINES – Spring turkey hunting season is right around the corner and many hunters are primed to head into the woods to pursue this most elusive quarry.

Hunters who harvest a turkey are reminded they are required to report their success to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by midnight of the day following the harvest, before processing it for consumption, before taking it to a locker or taxidermist, or before transporting it out-of-state, whichever comes first.

Hunters may report either by calling the phone number listed on the tag, by going to a license sales agent, or on the DNR's website, [www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov) then click on the red Harvest Reporting System button on the page.

Hunters will be asked for the Iowa county where the bird was harvested, if it was taken on public or private land, and the length of its longest spur. Once that information is provided, hunters will receive a confirmation number that must be written in the box provided on the harvest report tag then attach the tag to the animal. The tag must be attached to the animal for the report to be considered complete.

If no animal is harvested, no report is necessary.

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## **CATCHABLE TROUT STOCKING SEASON UNDERWAY, BUT STOCKING ACCESS WILL BE LIMITED**

ELKADER - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources began stocking catchable trout on March 31 in streams accessible to the hatchery trucks. Melting snow and ice will make truck access difficult or nearly impossible on some streams.

Anglers should be aware of this as they hike down some of the more remote streams only to discover the hatchery truck was not able to stock. Stocking trucks may be limited to easily accessible portions of many streams for the early part of the trout stocking season.

Stream sections with good access and areas adjacent to roads and parking lots should not be a problem. Some of the more easily accessible areas include Little Paint, Mink, Otter, Paint Creek, Trout Run and Sny Magill. Bailey's Ford and Backbone State Park will remain closed to vehicle traffic until the parking areas firm up. Many other streams will only be stocked from bridges or adjacent to suitable truck access.

As things dry up, more areas will become accessible to the stocking trucks. Larger trout fishing areas like the Turkey River at Big Spring Hatchery will also not be in optimal fishing conditions by April 1, due to high water and muddy angler access.

Anglers looking for more information about general conditions of a particular stream can call Manchester at 563-927-3276, Big Spring at 563-245-2446, or Decorah at 563-382-8324.

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Alliant Energy customers invited to purchase trees for \$25

## **EIGHT OPERATION RELEAF EVENTS PLANNED IN IOWA THIS SPRING**

DES MOINES – Iowans looking for a cost-effective, yet eye-pleasing way to reduce home heating and cooling costs are encouraged to participate in Operation ReLeaf. Operation ReLeaf is a residential tree planting program that promotes long-term energy and natural resource conservation.

Operation ReLeaf is a partnership initiative funded by Alliant Energy and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources with assistance from local partners, which include county conservation boards and county extension offices.

Through the program, about 3,000 high quality landscaping trees will be offered to Alliant Energy residential customers for \$25 each. The trees typically retail for \$65 or more and will be sold on a first-come, first served basis.

Alliant Energy will sponsor eight Operation ReLeaf events this spring in the following communities: Perry, April 12; Iowa Falls, April 19; Marion, April 26; Boone, May 3; Otley, May 10; Mason City and Keokuk, May 17; and Lansing, May 31. Tree species offered will vary at each event and include shade trees, ornamentals and conifers.

Operation ReLeaf participants must be Alliant Energy residential customers. Advanced order is recommended and advance purchase is limited to two trees per household. In the event there are extra trees available on distribution day, those trees will be released for purchase at that time. Order forms are available online ([www.alliantenergy.com/releaf](http://www.alliantenergy.com/releaf)).

“All trees are purchased through a bidding process to promote local nurseries,” says Paul Tauke, Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau Chief and State Forester. “This is a great way for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price.”

**For more information, contact Jessica Flatt with the Iowa DNR at 515-281-6749.**

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## **FROM THE BOTTOM UP – DNR TO UNVEIL RIVER TRASH SCULPTURE ON EARTH DAY**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Jackie Gautsch at [Jackie.Gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jackie.Gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov) or (319) 335-1761.

DES MOINES – Once deposited like industrial scat upon the earth, trash dredged from the Raccoon River bottom last June by hundreds of volunteers on the DNR’s annual Project AWARE river cleanup event will be celebrated on Earth Day – not as trash, but as art.

On April 22, the public is invited to view the sculpture from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the main lobby atrium of the Wallace State Office Building, located at 502 East Ninth St. in Des Moines. Artist David Williamson and DNR staff will be available during this time to greet visitors, answer questions, and most importantly, gather public input to complete the project.

Rather than a finished piece, the unveiling will reveal a sculpture-in-progress – your help is requested to complete the final transformation of the trash into finished sculpture. As a collaborative effort amongst cleanup volunteers, everyday citizens, and artist David Williamson, more public input is needed before this metamorphosis can be complete.

“Due to the collaborative nature of this project, we encourage visitors to join us on Earth Day to add their thoughts and inputs,” Williamson says. “With the sculpture about 75 percent complete, this is a great opportunity to welcome public input and the exchange of ideas that are so crucial to this type of project.”

This year marks the fourth sculpture to be unveiled as part of Project AWARE’s artistic offshoot known as “*Riverse*,” but it is the first year a *Riverse* sculpture will serve a functional purpose. While its artistic design will make it an interpretive piece that honors the work of volunteers, promotes environmental stewardship, and tells the story of Project AWARE, it will also be designed for use as a gate for the DNR building at the Iowa State Fair.

Along with the sculpture, a poem created through a similar collaborative effort, entitled *Prospectus*, will also be unveiled, and sculptures from the previous three years of *Riverse* will be on display.

AWARE organizers hope *Riverse* will return for this summer’s annual Project AWARE event, which takes place June 14-21, from Mason City to Cedar Falls on the Winnebago, Shell Rock, and Cedar rivers.

For more information, visit [www.iowaprojectaware.com](http://www.iowaprojectaware.com) or contact Jackie Gautsch at [Jackie.Gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jackie.Gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov) or (319) 335-1761.

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## **DNR OFFERS SPRINGTIME OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

DES MOINES — Spring has officially arrived and the Keepers of the Land, the volunteer program with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), offers many statewide volunteer events and opportunities to welcome the season.

- **Prairie Rescue Events:** Prairie restoration and planting events are happening throughout state in the following communities: Fayette on April 8, Sioux City on April 12, Lehigh on April 18, and Titonka and Sutherland on April 19. Volunteers are needed to assist with various restoration needs including planting, removal of invasive species, and prairie burning. For more information contact Whitney Davis at 515-281-6271.
- **Spring Operation ReLeaf and Plant Some Shade Events:** Spring tree distribution events will be held throughout the state in the following communities: Council Bluffs and Perry on April 12, Davenport on April 17, Iowa Falls on April 19, Marion, Oskaloosa, and Waterloo on April 26. Volunteers are needed to help with various event set-up and logistics needs. For more information contact Matt Brewer 515-242-6892 or Jessica Flatt 515-281-6749.
- **Ledges State Park Clean-up Event:** Members of the Friends of the Ledges are seeking volunteers to assist with a park clean-up day on April 26. Volunteers will be assisting with various outdoor projects including: clearing downed trees, removing litter, and painting and staining picnic tables. A thank you cookout will be held after the cleanup for all volunteers. For more information contact Dennis Buckles at 515-230-4345.
- **Campground Host Opportunity:** Officials at state parks throughout the state are seeking volunteers to serve as campground hosts throughout the upcoming camping season. Hosts are offered free on-site camping and assist park staff by greeting campers, answering visitor questions, and completing various maintenance tasks to ensure the camping area is welcoming to the public. State parks currently seeking volunteer hosts include: Elk Rock (Marion Co), Green Valley (Union Co), Lacey-Keosauqua (Van Buren Co), Lake Anita (Cass Co), Lake Ahquabi (Warren Co), Ledges (Boone Co), Palisades-Kepler (Linn Co), Pleasant Creek (Linn Co), Prairie Rose (Shelby Co), and Stephens State Forest (Lucas Co). For more information contact Elizabeth Gull at 515-281-0806.

A full listing of volunteer opportunities and events is available at [www.keepersoftheland.org](http://www.keepersoftheland.org)

**For more information, contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-0878 or**

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## **JACKRABBIT SAMPLES NEEDED ACROSS IOWA**

BOONE - Iowa State University (ISU) researchers are looking for hunter harvested or road killed jackrabbits from Iowa that will be used as part of a genetics study to provide insight into how Iowa jackrabbit populations are structured. Genetic data obtained from these tissue samples should provide insight into the degree of genetic relatedness and inbreeding within populations, differentiation from distant populations and movements within local populations.

This information will help develop conservation management strategies for the white-tailed jackrabbit in Iowa.

The Iowa population of jackrabbits has been declining for 40 years and the main reason is the loss of their preferred habitat. In recent years the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Bureau has made harvest season adjustments for this species, but there is no current biological information on jackrabbits to make management recommendations.

### **HOW TO HELP**

Collect genetic samples, including ears, tongues, feet, or internal muscles from road killed or hunter harvested jackrabbits. "If you know of hunters who harvest jackrabbits, ask them to keep a tissue sample," said Mark McInroy, upland wildlife technician with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Boone Research Station.

Requirements for the tissue sample are simple:

1. Place sample in a re-sealable plastic bag.
2. Record your name, phone, county, township, range, section on outside of bag in permanent marker.
3. Place in freezer.
4. Contact Sue Fairbanks with ISU, at 515-294-7315; or McInroy, at 515-432-2823 ext. 110.

Important: If you know of hunters who frequently harvest jackrabbits, inform them of the need for samples. "We don't expect a lot of road kill samples, so hunters are probably our best source of samples," McInroy said.

If you do find a whole carcass or have the entrails from a harvested specimen (and have freezer space to store them) ISU would also like to look at the reproductive tracts from these animals. Record the same information as above on the bags.

**If you have any questions contact Mark McInroy at the Boone Office 515-432-2823 ext. 110.**

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## **PROJECT LEARNING TREE® AWARDS TWO SERVICE-LEARNING GRANTS IN IOWA**

Washington, D.C. – Project Learning Tree® (PLT), the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation, announced today that it awarded *GreenWorks!* grants to Scattergood Friends School in West Branch and SOAR (Saving Our Avian Resources) in Dedham.

In West Branch, students will develop a prairie garden on top of a new root cellar on the school campus. The garden will control erosion, beautify the school entry, and provide students with opportunities to study native plants.

The small boarding school is also a working farm that provides meat and organic produce to the school and to the wider community. The school uses PLT invasive species materials in conjunction with the school's prairie.

In Dedham, SOAR will work with elementary and college students as part of a five-year project to reintroduce osprey to the Coon Rapids area. The students will build signs at a bird viewing station in Whiterock Conservancy.

The viewing area allows bird watchers to look across the river and into a reconstructed wetland. The wetland is a migratory stop over for shorebirds, geese, ducks, trumpeter swans, pelicans and more. Students and teachers will use concepts and information from a PLT workshop to design effective wetland and wild bird interpretive signs for the public.

Since 1992, Project Learning Tree has distributed more than \$500,000 to fund 730 grant projects in communities across the country. Proposals for the Spring 2008 grants are due on April 30, 2008. Grants up to \$5,000 are available.

For more information about *GreenWorks!*, and a complete list of Project Learning Tree's *GreenWorks!* grants awards, visit [www.plt.org](http://www.plt.org) or contact Vanessa Bullwinkle, Director of Operations and Marketing, 202.463.2472, [vbullwinkle@plt.org](mailto:vbullwinkle@plt.org).

For more information about PLT in Iowa, contact Barbara Gigar, Aquatic Education Program, at 641.747.2200 or [barb.gigar@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:barb.gigar@dnr.iowa.gov).

*Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation. PLT provides educators with comprehensive environmental education curriculum resources that can be*

*integrated into lesson plans for all grades and subject areas. PLT teaches students “how to think, not what to think” about complex environmental issues, and helps students learn the skills they need to make sound choices about the environment.*

*Developed in 1976, PLT has an international network of more than 500,000 trained educators using PLT materials that cover the total environment. The American Forest Foundation, a nonprofit conservation and education organization, works for healthy forests, quality environmental education, and informed decision-making about our communities and our world.*

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## **DNR SPRING SALE SET FOR MAY 10**

DES MOINES – The Iowa DNR will hold a spring auction Saturday, May 10, 2008 at the Cattle Barn on the Iowa State Fairgrounds. The gates will open at 8 a.m. and the auction will begin around 9 a.m. A public viewing of the items will be announced at a later date. The DNR is compiling a list of items and will have a sale bill available after April 15. This will be the final year the DNR will hold an auction.

The 2008 sale will include a 10 percent buyer’s premium that will be added to all sales. The premium is the fee paid for the auctioneer. For example, if the winning bid is \$20, the buyer will pay a 10 percent premium, or \$2, added to the bid after taxes, so the payment would be \$20, plus 6 percent sales tax, \$1.20, plus the premium fee, \$2, or \$23.20.

Items up for auction include firearms, boats, outboard motors, chainsaws, mowers, trailers, farm and office equipment and more. The items are sold “as is” with no guarantee or warranty.

Any person interested in purchasing a firearm at the auction must have either a valid Iowa permit to acquire pistols or revolvers, a federal firearms license, or a professional or non-professional permit to carry concealed weapons. The Iowa permit to acquire can be obtained from a sheriff’s office. Allow two to three weeks to receive the permit.

Payment must be made on auction day. All sales are final. Firearms must be removed from the site within one half hour after the sale of the firearm is completed. All other items must be removed from the sale site after full payment is made.

Sales taxes will be collected. Boats, snowmobiles, trailers and vehicles will pay taxes to the proper county office when registering those items.

The Iowa DNR reserves the right to reject any bids and withdraw any item from the sale at any time. To receive a copy of the sale bill, send an email to [susan.davenport@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:susan.davenport@dnr.iowa.gov) or a self addressed stamped envelop to 2008 Surplus Sale, Iowa DNR, 502 E. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319.

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## **PLANT NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS FOR BEST RESULTS**

If you are planning to plant trees and shrubs this spring; the advice of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Forestry Bureau is “go native.” While planting exotic non native flowering or fancy colored trees and shrubs may appeal to many land and home owners, using native trees and shrub seedlings from an Iowa grown nursery is best in terms of low maintenance and a healthy forest ecosystem.

“Native trees and shrubs are better adapted to Iowa’s extremes in weather and to Iowa soils, providing superior native wildlife habitat,” said Roger Jacob, nursery manager for Iowa DNR’s Forestry Bureau. “Native plants have adapted themselves over time with insect and disease issues, and they are less likely to be stressed than non-native plants during extreme weather events such as late freezes or droughts, and they do offer tremendous spring flowering and fall color opportunities.”

The State Forest Nursery, in Ames, produces hardy, native trees and shrubs to landowners at affordable costs for sale to private landowners for reforestation, soil erosion control and wildlife habitat.

This spring the State Forest Nursery has a good supply of native trees and shrubs perfect for any wildlife habitat project – whether it is for the backyard, a small acreage or large planting. Of special interest to many Iowans who may just be getting started planting native trees and shrubs, the State Forest Nursery has a 20 tree/shrub Song Bird packet for \$20 and four Wildlife Packets of 200 trees/shrubs for \$90.

Call 800-865-2477 or visit [www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/](http://www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/) for more information.

**For more information contact Jacob at 515-233-1161 or [Roger.Jacob@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Roger.Jacob@dnr.iowa.gov). To order seedlings contact the State Forest Nursery at 1-800-865-2477.**

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